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DISPOSITION ☆ ☆ OF ☆ ☆ WORLD WAR II CIVILIAN DEAD

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DISPOSITION OF WORLD WAR II CIVILIAN DEAD

THIS PAMPHLET IS FOR THE GUIDANCE OF THE NEXT OF KIN OF ALL OUR WORLD WAR II CIVILIAN DEAD, NOW BURIED OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES.

WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

FOREWORD

THE Congress of the United States has authorized the Secretary of War to carry out all feasible wishes of the next of kin for disposition of the remains of those Americans who made the supreme sacrifice during World War II. The next of kin of those members of the armed forces as well as of the civilians who served with the armed forces will be requested to indicate their wishes.

This program is not alone a War Department program, but rather a coordinated program jointly planned and participated in by all the armed forces of the United States and those governmental agencies whose personnel served overseas in World War II with the armed forces. The Quartermaster General of the Army, acting for the Secretary of State, will administer this program.

The information contained in the succeeding pages is published so that, as next of kin, you may become acquainted with

your rights under the law, and learn of the provisions that have been made for carrying out your desires. If you have a question or several questions, not included in the following pages, please send it—or them—to the Office of The Quartermaster General, Memorial Division, War Department, Washington 25, D. C. Every endeavor will be made to carry out your expressed desire.

All efforts will be devoted to insuring such final resting places for our honored dead as they themselves would choose. The selection of the procedure to be followed, however, is now yours, as next of kin.

Question: Who is the next of kin?

Answer: In order best to insure a proper disposition of the remains, the War Department will, in the absence of special circumstances, recognize designations for disposition of decedent's remains from persons specified below in the order indicated:

(a) If the deceased was unmarried.

1. Father.
2. Mother.

3. Brothers over 21 years of age, in the order of their seniority.
4. Sisters over 21 years of age, in the order of their seniority.
5. Next of kin of legal age in order of their relation to decedent.

(b) If the deceased was married.

1. Widow or widower (if not divorced, separated, or remarried).
2. Sons of the deceased, who are over 21 years of age, in the order of their seniority.
3. Daughters of the deceased, who are over 21 years of age, in the order of their seniority.
4. Next of kin of legal age in the order specified for unmarried deceased personnel, as set forth in paragraph (*a*) 5 above.

Question: What should I do if I conclude that I am *not* the next of kin?

Answer: If, after reading the answers to the preceding question, you have decided that you are *not* the next of kin, *not* the one authorized to direct the disposition of the remains, please fill in Part III of the

"Request for Disposition of Remains" form and return it in the postage-free, addressed envelope that has been provided.

Question: If I have concluded that I *am* the next of kin, may I relinquish my right to someone else?

Answer: If you *are* the next of kin as outlined in answer to the first question, you may relinquish your rights to dispose of the decedent's remains. The rights which you had then pass to the next existing person in the order of eligibility outlined in answer to the first question. To accomplish this, please complete part II of the form entitled "Request for Disposition of Remains" and return it to the Office of The Quartermaster General, Memorial Division, War Department, Washington 25, D. C.

Question: What should I do if I conclude that I *am* the next of kin and wish to exercise my rights?

Answer: If you have now decided that you are the next of kin, please read the following pages and make your decision on the various options that are presented for your selection. Then please complete part I of the "Request for Disposition of Remains"

form, have the form notarized in the space provided for this purpose, place the form in the addressed, postage-free envelope that has been furnished and promptly mail it.

The reinterment of these honored dead is a tremendous undertaking. It will be carried out area by area, from all over the world. It is an undertaking that will require many months, probably years, to complete. It will be accomplished in reverent and orderly manner. Your action in promptly returning the completed "Request for Disposition of Remains" form will greatly assist in the performance of this sacred duty. Prompt action is stressed. You are urged, therefore, to return the inclosed request form within 30 days after its receipt by you.

Although emphasis has been laid upon the necessity for your prompt action, even answer by return mail will not effect immediate action in event that you decide upon option 2. If you should elect option 2, it is advised that no funeral or other personal arrangements be made until you are further notified by this office.

OPTIONS TO BE GIVEN NEXT OF KIN

Option 1

The Remains be Interred in a Permanent American Military Cemetery Overseas.

The establishment of permanent American Military Cemeteries overseas in the various areas in which American Forces served, is contemplated.

Option 2

The Remains be Returned to the United States, or any Possession or Territory thereof, for Interment by Next of Kin in a Private Cemetery.

Shipment will be made to the city or town designated by the next of kin.

Option 3

The Remains Shipped within, or returned to a Foreign Country, the Homeland of the Deceased for Interment by Next of Kin in Private Cemetery.

Shipment to a foreign country is dependent upon the ability of the United States Government to obtain entry and reinterment authority therein. If authority can

be obtained, shipment will be made to the city or town designated by next of kin.

Alternate Choice

If the options described above do not provide for your wish, it is suggested that you submit specific desire to the Office of The Quartermaster General for final decision by the War Department as to its legality and practicability.

Cremation

If cremation of the remains is desired, specific request that the remains be cremated should be made on page 2 of the form, "Request for Disposition of Remains," in the block titled, "Remarks and Additional Instructions." The request should include a statement as to whether the next of kin desires to arrange for private cremation services or wishes the Government to make necessary cremation arrangements. Upon receipt of this request a letter pertaining to the Government procedure to carry out the wishes of the next of kin in this respect will be forwarded to the next of kin from the Office of The Quartermaster General.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON OPTIONS GIVEN ABOVE

All Options

On all options, all costs of exhumation, preparation of remains, casketing, and shipment to the city or town designated by next of kin, or his duly authorized representative, will be borne by the Government of the United States.

Option 1 — Permanent American Military Cemetery Overseas

The establishment of permanent American Military Cemeteries overseas in the various areas in which American Forces served is contemplated. These cemeteries will be beautified, maintained, and permanently cared for by the United States Government. To assist the next of kin in determining the place of final interment, a pamphlet describing permanent American Military Cemeteries abroad, and National Cemeteries in the United States, is inclosed. National Cemeteries in the United States are available only for the interment of deceased members

of the armed forces. All expenses incident to burial in permanent United States Military Cemeteries will be paid by the Government. When the next of kin requests that remains be interred in such cemeteries, they will be removed from their temporary burial location, prepared for reburial, casketed, transferred to the site of final interment, and reburied there, all at Government expense. An Army chaplain will conduct appropriate religious services at the time of this reburial. The location of the permanent burial site will then be communicated to you. An appropriate grave marker will identify the grave.

Option 2 — Private Cemetery in United States

If option 2 is selected, in addition to the expenses outlined above, the Government will contribute a sum not to exceed $50 toward the defrayment of actual burial expenses. Costs or expenses in excess of $50 must be borne by the person who contracted for the services. Funeral services at the private cemetery will be as arranged by the

next of kin. Arrangements for a funeral director to receive the remains and for the burial plot are the responsibility of the next of kin.

An escort provided at the expense of the Government, or an escort who is a representative of the agency in whose employ the deceased was at the time of death, will accompany the remains to the city or town designated by the next of kin and will be instructed to obtain the signature of the next of kin, funeral director or other designated representative of next of kin, in receipt for the remains. The escort will deliver appropriate printed instructions regarding the manner of submitting claim for the Government contribution of $50 toward defrayment of actual burial expenses.

Option 3—Private Cemetery Overseas

If option 3 is selected, in addition to those services provided under all options, the Government will contribute a sum not to exceed $50 toward the defrayment of actual burial expenses. Costs or expenses in excess of $50 must be borne by the person who contracted for the services. Funeral services

at the private cemetery will be as arranged by the next of kin. Arrangements for a funeral director to receive the remains for the burial plot are the responsibility of the next of kin.

An escort provided at the expense of the Government, or an escort who is a representative of the agency in whose employ the deceased was at the time of death, will accompany the remains to the city or town designated by the next of kin and will be instructed to obtain the signature of the next of kin, funeral director, or other designated representative of next of kin, in receipt for the remains.

The Government will provide assistance in obtaining medical clearance and reinterment authority. Next of kin must arrange for burial plot and such funeral services as may be desired.

Upon application to the Office of The Quartermaster General, Memorial Division, War Department, Washington 25, D. C., after interment, the next of kin will be furnished appropriate instructions regarding the manner of submitting claim for reim-

bursement of a sum not to exceed $50 to cover expenses incurred during final interment.

Identity of deceased

Prior to the registering of a grave overseas as containing the remains of a designated (by name) civilian, every means possible was employed and every known method was pursued to establish definitely and positively the identity of the deceased. In this respect, no effort was considered to be too great and meticulous attention was given to smallest details. Identity having been thus established, evidence of identity was buried with the remains and indicated on the grave marker. If removal and reburial elsewhere become necessary, all records will again be checked and all evidence of identity again examined. Military personnel especially trained in this procedure supervise and directly control these operations. Also, from the time of exhumation of the remains until their reception by next of kin, they will be under constant protection of military escorts. Thus, when the next

of kin is requested to indicate his desires in the manner of final disposition of the remains of a certain decedent, he and all others may rest assured that the identity of the remains has been definitely established.

INQUIRIES CONCERNING THE DECEASED

When information concerning the deceased is desired, the inquiry should be addressed to the office listed below:

Office of The Quartermaster General,
Memorial Division, War Department,
Washington 25, D. C.

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DEDICATION

In deep and everlasting appreciation of the heroic efforts of those who, in keeping their country free, made the supreme sacrifice in World War II—the entire Nation has been dedicated to disposing of the mortal remains of those honored dead, in a manner consistent with the wishes of their next of kin.

Harry S. Truman

PRESIDENT OF THE
UNITED STATES